

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
ARIZONA ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS TASK FORCE**

December 13, 2007

2:15 p.m., MST

The Arizona English Language Learners (ELL) Task Force met in Canyon Room I at the Westin La Paloma, 3800 East Sunrise Drive, in Tucson, Arizona. Mr. Alan Maguire, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 2:18 p.m. MST.

1. Call to Order

Present:

Mr. Alan Maguire, Chairman

Mr. Jim DiCello

Ms. Margaret Garcia Dugan

Ms. Johanna Haver

Ms. Eileen Klein

Ms. Karen Merritt

Ms. Anna Rosas

Absent:

Dr. John Baracy

Dr. Eugene Garcia

A quorum was present for the purpose of conducting business.

2. Approval of September 12, 2007, October 10, 2007 and November 8, 2007 Minutes of Task Force Meetings

Mr. DiCello moved that the minutes be approved. Ms. Garcia Dugan seconded the motion. The Task Force members approved the minutes.

3. Review and Discussion of the Independent Review of the Discrete Skills Inventory

Chairman Alan Maguire apologized on behalf of Ms. Susan Pimentel who was unable to attend the Task Force meeting due to inclement weather and travel delays. Mr. Maguire presented Ms. Pimentel's background information. Ms. Pimentel is a nationally recognized educational analyst and standards consultant. She is a graduate of Cornell University and holds degrees in early childhood education and law. She was special counsel to the Maryland governor and has worked on education standards and other education issues with the following states: Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, North Carolina, Illinois, Arkansas, Wyoming, Missouri, Wisconsin, Delaware, Arizona, California, Ohio, and Maryland. Ms. Pimentel is involved in

several national efforts, including the American Diploma Project. The Fordham Foundation recently rated states in which Ms. Pimentel has coordinated the development of standards as having among the best content standards. As a result of her efforts working with the state of Maryland, the state raised its ranking from 43rd to 10th in 2000. Ms. Pimentel is co-author of *Raising the Standard: an Eight-Step Action Guide for Schools and Communities*. In October 2007, U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings announced the appointment of Ms. Pimentel to the National Assessment Governing Board for a 4-year term.

Mr. Maguire commented that Ms. Pimentel is extremely qualified and has worked in the past with Arizona with regard to Arizona's standards. He stated that she is the most appropriate person qualified to respond to the requirements of the task force model. Mr. Maguire referenced Ms. Pimentel's report of her review of the standards and examination of the DSI. Mr. Maguire stated that Ms. Pimentel's process was an active one, in which she proposed changes and improvements. She endeavored to ensure that the DSI components were grade-level appropriate and added a section dealing with grammar skills. She worked extensively on this section to ensure it is comprehensive and in line with skills identified by grammarians. Mr. Maguire stated that Ms. Pimentel made judgments concerning proper placement and progress of specific skills, and she added examples throughout the DSI.

In addition, Ms. Pimentel, with the assistance of staff, added two supporting documents for irregular verbs and irregular nouns. Mr. Maguire stated that Ms. Pimentel's summary finding is that the DSI is consistent with the K-12 English Language Proficiency Standards and that she hopes it will be an excellent resource for teachers.

Mr. Maguire asked for questions.

Ms. Rosas commented that during her attendance of one of the DSI presentations, she heard several people voicing frustration because of the limited time for the presenters. She stated that much information was given but there was little opportunity to discuss the information. She suggested that more time be allotted for ADE's Round Two presentations.

Ms. Haver asked for clarification regarding kindergarten students: would they need simply to use verbs and nouns or would they be required to know the grammatical terms? Mr. Maguire answered that the DSI was developed as a response to concerns of people in the field regarding the high level of the proficiency standards. The DSI has been developed to help guide teachers in classroom practices. The DSI is only part of the process. Ms. Haver asked if it could be made clear that kindergarten students do not have to learn the grammatical terms. Mr. Maguire assured her that would be clear.

4. Discussion and Possible Approval of Procedures and Standards for Review and Approval of Alternate Proposed Programs

Mr. Maguire introduced the form for schools and districts to use to apply for adoption of models other than the Task Force model. Mr. Maguire reminded the Task Force that they have reviewed drafts prior to this and that this draft should be ready for approval with some minor changes. He explained the sections of the form briefly, stating that under the “Authority” section are the specific statutory cites and requirements that a proposed model must meet. Page two of the application outlines the instructions for submission of a model to the Department of Education. He explained that the Department and the Task Force will need time to review the model, and the Task Force will preliminarily review each alternate model at the second ELL Task Force meeting after the alternate model’s submission, thus approximately 45 days. The Task Force will then make initial recommendations for changes, clarifications or modifications. At the next Task Force meeting, members may vote to approve, modify, or reject the proposed model or may request additional clarification. Mr. Maguire added that in some cases more time would be required, depending upon the complexity of the model submitted. Page three of the application includes a checklist of requirements for compliance and instructions for applicants to provide a description of the model, a timeline for implementation, and expected outcomes for the proposed model.

Mr. Maguire stated that the approval process for models does not mitigate the state’s budget cycle and that the budget cycle will have an effect on model submission. Alternate models may be submitted at any time; however, the budget cycle will proceed regardless of the timing of the submission. For example, if the cost of a proposed model is higher than an already adopted model, the higher costs cannot be funded until the next budget cycle.

Ms. Merritt asked if there would be template for the application. Mr. Maguire replied that the application form asks applicants for a response in the form of a narrative, thus allowing applicants to explain certain aspects of the model without the constraints of space in a template. Ms. Merritt asked what kind of research applicants are required to submit. Mr. Maguire stated that, although applicants need not cover the volume of research that the Task Force evaluated, they should, as the Task Force did, consider a combination of research. The Task Force has considered evidence from the field, research that was summarized for them, and individuals’ testimony.

Ms. Rosas asked if districts can submit applications or if the applications need to be school by school. Mr. Maguire replied that a district can make an application and that once a model is adopted it is valid not only for the applicant, but throughout the state; other districts and schools can use any approved model.

Mr. Maguire stated that the 30-day reference in the application needs to be changed to 45 days and that some language may need tightening. He asked if there were any more questions or comments regarding the application. Mr. DiCello moved to adopt the application with the change on page two regarding the 45 days and with the understanding that any needed technical corrections will be made. Ms. Dugan Garcia seconded the motion. There were no objections to the adoption of the Application for Proposed Program for ELLs.

5. Discussion and possible approval of Individual Language Learner Plan (ILLP)

Mr. Maguire referred to the sample Individual Language Learner Plan (ILLP) and stated that the ILLP is an implementation item for the model, which requires its availability. He said he thought it would be useful to walk through the form to see how it works. He explained that schools with fewer than 16 ELL students can use the form. The process is similar to the process for alternate model proposal in that the requirements of the law must be met regarding time allocation, content, and focus on English language development. Ms. Merritt asked if the 16 or fewer students meant in total or in an individual proficiency band. Mr. Maguire answered that it is in the school, but the Task Force may want to revisit this at some time. For now, the focus has been to figure out the methodology. He added that as Task Force members review the form, they can make note of possible modifications. He asked for further questions; there were none.

6. Presentation and Discussion of Training Program for School District Personnel on Structured English Immersion Models

Mr. Maguire introduced Mr. John Stollar, Associate Superintendent for Accountability, to discuss the model and the DSI training. Mr. Stollar stated that the training for the model is exhaustive, but he has received positive feedback from people attending the in-services already provided. He said there would be three more half-day presentations scheduled for the Monday following the Task Force meeting and that the training would resume in January. Mr. Stollar stated that the goal of the Department of Education is to continue providing Round One, Part B training. He said the Department of Education has assigned a case manager to every district in the state. Mr. Stollar suggested that before January 24, 2008, districts should share their drafts of model proposals with their case managers. This way the approval process can move more quickly and districts can have budget requests ready for the Legislature. He stated that the Round Two training will be specific pedagogical training. He said that 63% of all ELL students are in about 20 school districts. ADE has targeted those districts and Mr. Stollar said he believed that the training already has been set up. He said that ADE has tentatively planned to conduct some orientation sessions to provide a broad overview of the model. Summer institutes will be provided for districts not participating in the earlier trainings. ADE will try to provide sessions during the intersession of year-round schools.

Ms. Merritt asked if the districts with the high ELL student populations could send people to some of the early trainings and then be able to return and train others in their district. Mr. Stollar replied that ADE needed to make sure the training is as consistent as possible. He said he anticipated that ADE would have more Round Two trainings open. Mr. Maguire reminded the Task Force of the language they had used with regard to the training for the models. Three sets of training are essential for successful implementation of the SEI models: Implementation Training, Discrete Skills Inventory Training, and Discrete Skills Inventory Teaching Methods Training. He referenced the three paragraphs in the models describing the training using the word "shall." (The model states: "All SEI Classroom teachers *shall* receive all three trainings.

Principals, District Superintendents, Counselors, and school and district personnel responsible for ELL programs also *shall* receive the Implementation Training.... School personnel who prepare student schedules *shall* receive additional implementation training on scheduling.... All SEI Classroom teachers and instructional personnel responsible for instructional supervision *shall* receive training on the content of the Discrete Skills Inventory.... SEI Classroom teachers and instructional personnel responsible for instructional supervision *shall* receive training on the methods and strategies to be used in teaching the content of the Discrete Skills Inventory.”) Mr. Maguire said he appreciated the work of the Department of Education and thanked Mr. Stollar.

7. Presentation and Discussion of Upcoming Task Force Activities

Mr. Maguire stated that next month the Task Force will likely begin to see alternate programs submitted. He said that with next year’s budget form online, the Task Force may see some preliminary information. The next Task Force meeting was scheduled for January 10, 2008 at 1:30 p.m. There were no questions or comments regarding this agenda item.

8. Call to the Public

Dr. Barbara Valencia-Ortega from Scottsdale Unified District was the first speaker. Referring to the draft copy of the ILLP, she stated that at the end of the document there is a place for parents, the Language Arts teacher, the ELL coordinator, and site administrator to sign. She stated that she was concerned over the inclusion in the document of the Arizona statute that refers to ELL students becoming proficient in English in one year. She asked how she could help her staff to feel comfortable signing the document that indicates the goal of one year’s English proficiency for students when practitioners know this does not happen. She stated her concern over repercussions.

The next speaker was Patricia Marsh from Naco Elementary. She stated her thanks for the budget worksheets being on the ADE website prior to the training but said she noticed the offsets for federal funding. She stated that smaller districts such as her own are struggling financially and that 92% of the funding for her district comes from state and federal grants and subsidies. She stated that, with the offset, her district would have no way of getting the teachers needed to teach the ELL classes. Her school needs three more teachers for ELD and, with the offsets, the school will not be able to afford the other things they need. She added that they already have no art or music classes or a full-time counselor and that there is nowhere else they can pull money from.

Next, Tracey Pastor from Phoenix Elementary School District addressed the Task Force. She stated that she is a principal of a K-8 school and that the school has a Reading First Program. She stated that she understands that an alternative model was submitted on behalf of Reading First schools. Additionally, her district is submitting an alternative model. She asked how that would work in practice. Regarding the Round Two training, she commented that although she wants her

teachers thoroughly trained, having so many teachers missing seven days is difficult, particularly before the spring testing. She said that she would support the train-the-trainer idea.

The last speaker was Sharon Trischan from the Roosevelt District. She stated that her question was similar to the previous speaker's regarding the train-the-trainer idea. She said that she is thankful for the training and understands the need to control the train-the-trainer but that her district will need approximately 20 more teachers for implementation of the model. The present schedule of training will miss these teachers.

9. Discussion of Future Meeting Dates

This item was covered earlier.

10. Adjournment

Mr. DiCello moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Garcia Dugan seconded the motion. There were no objections to adjournment. The meeting adjourned at 3:11 p.m.

Alan Maguire, Chairman
February 14, 2008